

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 04578 211615Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /101 W
-----012522 211908Z /40

R 211515Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6096

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4578

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PO US PEPR CG

SUBJ: THE ZAIRIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES DEFENDS MOBUTO REGIME
TO AMBASSADOR

1. THE ZAIRIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN LISBO CALLED ON ME ON JUNE 21 IN WHAT WAS APPARENTLY MORE THAN A SIMPLE COURTESY CALL ON A NEW AMBASSADOR. THE CHARGE REQUESTED THE VISIT "TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST TO OUR TWO COUNTRIES". HE LED OFF OUR MEETING WITH A LENGTHY EXPLANATION AND DEFENSE OF THE MOBUTO REGIME WHICH HE SAID WAS BEING SLANDERED BY SOME OF THE PORTUGUESE AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS. THE GIST OF HIS ARGUMENT WAS THAT WESTERN-STYLE DEMOCRACY WOULD NOT WORK IN A COUNTRY LIKE AZIRE AND THAT MOBUTO'S GOVERNMENT DID PERMIT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION BUT WITHIN A SINGLE PARTY SYSTEM. THIS, HE CLAIMED, WAS BASED ON AFRICAN VILLAGE EXPERIENCE. HE ALSO DWELT AT LENGTH ON MOBUTO'S POLICY OF RECONCILIATION WITH POLITICAL OPPONENTS, MANY OF WHOM HE CLAIMED HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO RETURN TO ZAIRE AND SOME OF WHOM HAD ASSUMED POSTS OF IMPORTANCE.

2. AT THE END OF HIS SPEECH, HE REFERRED TO THE IMPORTANCE OF PORTUGAL IN THE AFRICAN PICTURE, ESPECIALLY TO PORTUGUESE
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PAGE 02 LISBON 04578 211615Z

POTENTIAL FOR EXERCISING GREATER INFLUENCE IN ANGOLA AND ASKED FOR MY "ADVICE" IN THAT REGARD. I THANKED HIM FOR HIS EXPLANATION, OBSERVING THAT AS ONE WHO HAD HAD NO EXPERIENCE WITH AFRICAN AFFAIRS AND WHO FOUND HIMSELF IN A COUNTRY WITH A GREAT INTEREST IN AFRICA, I WAS ALWAYS EAGER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SITUATION ON THE CONTINENT. I SAID THAT I COULD NOT PRESUME TO

GIVE HIM ANY ADVICE BUT ASSUMED THAT HE HAS BEEN TRYING
TO GET HIS STORY ACROSS TO PORTUGUESE OFFICIALS AND
THE PORTUGUESE PUBLIC.

3. I COULD NOT TELL WHETHER THE CHARGE SIMPLY ACTED
ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE IN COMING TO SEE ME OR WHETHER THE
MOBUTO GOVERNMENT HAS INSTRUCTED ITS ENVOYS
TO TRY TO COUNTERACT THE BAD PRESS IT HAS BEEN GETTING.
BLOOMFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, AMBASSADORS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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